



# CITY OF SAN ANTONIO

## Department of Community Initiatives

*Dennis Campa, Director*

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# SENIOR SAVVY

THE BOB ROSS SENIOR MULTI-SERVICE HEALTH & RESOURCE CENTER

## FROM THE ADMINISTRATOR

BY PETE MCKINNON

May is Older Americans Month, a great time to bring attention to the issues that affect older adults and create community-wide opportunities to help older Americans improve their quality of life. This year's theme is "Living Today For a Better Tomorrow," and we, as a nation, must work together to give older adults the tools they need to make healthy decisions.

By 2030, one in every five Americans will be age 65 or older. Current statistics reflect that the population of Americans 65 and over will increase from 35 million in 2000 to 40 million in 2010 (a 15% increase) and then to 55 million in 2020 (a 36% increase for that decade). In San Antonio, it is expected that our residents 60 and older will number over 500,000 (one fifth of the total population).

Although the risk of disease increases with advancing age, poor health is not an inevitable consequence of aging. Many illnesses, disabilities and even death associated with chronic disease are preventable.

Nearly 40% of deaths in America

can be attributed to poor health habits such as lack of physical exercise, poor eating habits and smoking. Older Americans can prevent or control chronic disease by adopting healthy habits such as exercising regularly, maintaining a healthy diet and ceasing tobacco use.

The benefits of regular physical activity include weight control; healthy bones, muscles and joints; arthritis relief; reduced symptoms of anxiety and depression; and more. Exercise does not have to be strenuous and is safe for people of all age groups. In fact, it's healthier to exercise than eliminate it altogether. Older Americans can greatly benefit from a regular exercise routine that includes strength, balance, stretching and endurance exercises.

In addition to a regular exercise routine, good nutrition is vital in maintaining good health. Improving older Americans' diets can reduce the occurrence of chronic diseases, but most older adults over age 65 do not maintain a healthy diet. Reducing saturated fats and eat-

ing a balanced diet of fruits, vegetables, and grains can help out older Americans on the right track to staying healthy.

Studies have shown that engaging in social activities within the community can greatly improve mental health. In fact, research has demonstrated a strong relationship between volunteering and mental health and that volunteering provides older adults with greater benefits than younger volunteers. Benefits include improved mental and physical health, greater life satisfaction, lower rates of depression and lower mortality rates.

On Wednesday, April 29th, the Mayor and City Council will issue a Proclamation recognizing May as Older American's Month and honoring San Antonio's older American's. The Proclamation ceremony will begin at 9:00 AM in Council Chambers, Municipal Plaza Building, 114 W. Commerce. A reception will follow on the Mezzanine level. We hope to see you there!

(Sources: U.S. Administration on Aging and the U.S. Census Bureau)

## CASE MANAGEMENT

**Residential Homestead Exemption:** Bexar Appraisal District provides free services to constituents interested in knowing what kind of property discounts on taxes they may qualify for. See the insert to this newsletter for pertinent information related to several of these exemptions associated with Seniors.

The Department of Community Initiatives (DCI) through its



Center for Working Families To apply for any of these exemptions, please contact the Bexar Appraisal Office at (210)

224-2432 or visit their website at [www.bcad.org](http://www.bcad.org) or visit Richard Guzman in Room 130 or call him @ 207-5302.



Individuals with chronic pain frequently show signs of emotional distress in the form of depression, anxiety or irritability. It is often believed that pain is only relieved through the use of medications or surgery. However, there are multiple holistic options available to manage chronic pain.

Last month, as part of a community project, three nursing students from the University of Texas Health Science Center met with 10 seniors to discuss multiple holistic options available to manage chronic pain.

Such options that exist include group therapy with a behavioral emphasis. This form of group therapy is often designed to help people gain control of the emotional reactions associated with chronic pain.

Throughout the four week group therapy sessions, seniors were offered opportunities to learn meditation and exercise techniques for arthritis, self-reflection and meditation through journaling, relaxation and flexibility through yoga, and decreasing depression

through music and dance therapy.

The objective of the pain management class was to help change one's approach to manage pain through group therapy sessions and to manage the relationship between emotional distress and pain. Significant improvements were shown in the overall quality of life.

Of those seniors who participated in the group therapy sessions, a significant improvement in morale and attitude were demonstrated.

## NUTRITION

I hope everyone had a great time at Brackenridge Park and the San Antonio Zoo. It was a lot of fun. May is going to be just as exciting. On Wednesday May 6<sup>th</sup>, Adult Protective Services will deliver a presentation on Senior Fraud at 11:00 in the Dining Room. On Thursday, May 7<sup>th</sup>, we will be going on a shopping trip to Wal-Mart and

to San Antonio Shoes.

The City of San Antonio's Comprehensive Nutrition Project annual Jamaica (festival) celebration at Rosedale Park will be held on Friday, May 15<sup>th</sup>. All nutrition sites will be closed on that day. Jamaica will take place from 9:00a.m.-3:00p.m. All proceeds from Jamaica will benefit

those nutrition centers selling food or arts & crafts.

Lastly, on Thursday, May 28<sup>th</sup>, we will be going to the Missions.

If you are interested in signing up for any of these events, please inquire with the nutrition section.



### AARP Wraps Up Tax-Aide

Over the last 11 weeks, AARP volunteer tax preparers assisted

391 clients at the Bob Ross Center. Their hard work over 21 days netted community seniors \$89,809. AARP is a strong partner for services at the Bob

Ross. We salute their accomplishment and look forward to their tax preparation services next year.

## LEEZA'S PLACE



Leeza's Place by WellMed @ the Bob Ross Senior Center has participated in different events throughout the community in an effort to make our organization visible and known to caregivers.

We offer several support groups to help caregivers take their oxygen first while caring for aging parents, spouses, and/or children that are dealing with Alzheimer's, Dementia or other debilitating

chronic diseases. One of the support groups that has made Leeza's Place their second home is the Alamo Area Stroke Support Group. The activities held by this group benefit its members, especially when a speaker presents information on a subject of interest to the group.

A special "thank you" to the San Antonio Fire Department for addressing the concerns our loved ones shared with them. The recommendation is, when in doubt, call 911 and let the operator determine the

degree of your emergency. New members are always welcomed. Come meet the Alamo Area Stroke Support Group!

One of the ten commandments of Caregiving is "Plan Ahead - Have a Contingency Plan". *Prepare a clear written list of tasks for anyone who may offer assistance. Planning ahead is vital because it allows your loved one to feel safe, have continuity and lessening their anxiety.*



**The Alamo Area Stroke Support Group**  
every Thursday from 10:00 AM— 1:00 PM, in the Board Room



## THE BOB ROSS SENIOR MULTI-SERVICE HEALTH & RESOURCE CENTER

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*This months newsletter courtesy of:*

### Mark Your Calendar:

- ⇒ May is Older Americans Month
- ⇒ May 6, 2009: Senior Fraud Presentation @ The BRC
- ⇒ May 15, 2009: Senior Jamaica at Rosedale Park
- ⇒ May 15-16, 2009: AARP Lifestival at Henry B. Gonzalez



## KEEPING THE BOB ROSS CENTER SPOTLESS

Over and over again, when local, national and international visitors tour the Bob Ross Center, they always compliment us on how clean this facility is maintain. There is one reason, and one reason alone, such praise is given—our custodial staff.

Janitorial services at the Bob Ross are contracted through CleanCo. CleanCo is locally owned by Cosme Romero. The custodial services company has been in business for over 10 years and holds contracts for other City facilities around San Antonio. At the Bob Ross, CleanCo staff are augmented by an employee of AARP's Senior Community Services Employment Program (SCSEP) and one volunteer.

CleanCo employees Maria Lopez (mornings) and Diana Gutierrez (afternoons) to handle the heavy work—trash collections, bathrooms, floors, etc. Maria Ayon-Valdez and Mary Lou Enriquez are employed through AARP's Senior Community Services Employment Program. They dedicate 18 hours a week to keep our windows, furniture and countertops clean. Stephen Berry is our awesome volunteer who keeps our three acres of property free of debris and our park furniture glistening. Aside from this daily routine, Cosme himself comes once a quarter to strip and wax tile floors and shampoo carpets. The phenomenal aspect of this job is that these part-time folks maintain 25,000 square-feet, daily!

We want to recognize and express our thanks to all our custodial services staff for their tireless work in keeping us spotless. THANK YOU !!!



Mary Lou Enriquez



Maria Ayon-Valdez



Diana Gutierrez



Maria Lopez



Cosme Romero



Steven Berry